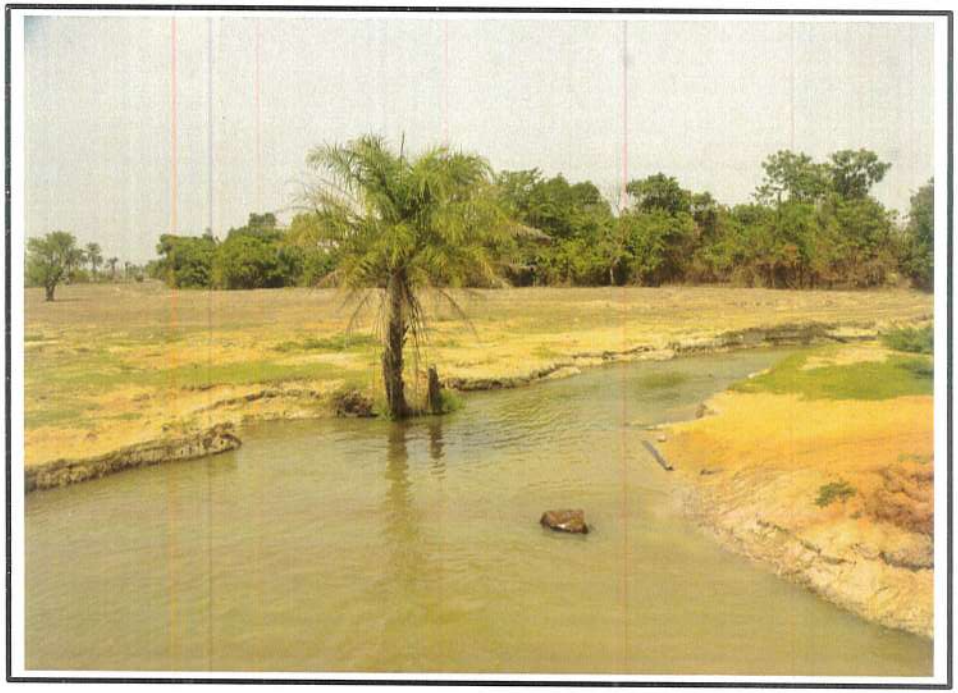
AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF KYARAKU: A Pre-Colonial Independent Nupe Sovereign Kingdom Along the Benue River

KYARAKU RIVER

AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF KYARAKU: A Pre-Colonial Independent Nupe Sovereign Kingdom Along the Benue River



KYARAKU RIVER

Chapter 15
Al-Hijr (The Rock)

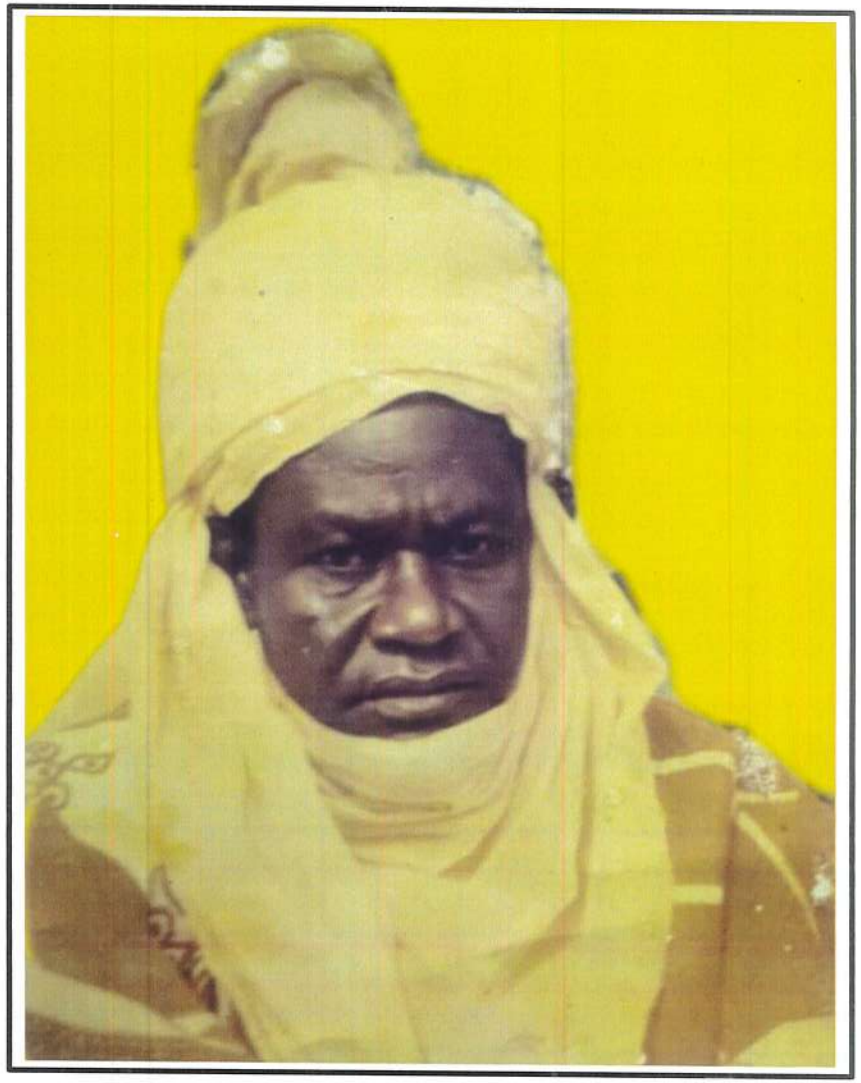
23. And indeed, it is We who give life and cause death, and We are the Inheritor.

24. And We have already known the preceding generations among you, and We have already known the later ones to come.

25. And indeed, your Lord will gather them; indeed, He is Wise and Knowing.

MEMBERS OF THE RECONSTITUTED HISTORICAL RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION COMMITTEE

1. ALH, ISA ALIYU NDAKO ..... Chairman
2. MUHAMMED BADAMASI NDAKO ..... Member
3. HASSAN ADA USMAN ..... Member
4. SULAIMAN YARO MAKU ..... Member
5. SAIDU BALA NDAKO ..... Member
6. IBRAHIM NDA LIMAN ..... Member
7. IBRAHIM ISA ALIYU ..... Secretary



ALH. ISA ALIYU NDAKO,
DANBURAN NASARAWA/TAFIDAN LOKO
REGENT OF KYARAKU

FOREWORD

Dear Reader,

It is with great pleasure that I introduce you to this historical book on Kyaraku. This book is a product of the tireless efforts of dedicated researchers, historians, and writers who have worked tirelessly to bring you a comprehensive account of the past to uncover the secrets and stories that have shaped us as a resilient people. The pages within this book offer a fascinating journey through time, exploring the events, people, and ideas that have shaped us and our culture.

Sequel to the first edition of the Kyaraku history in 199 4, which came after the History of Loko Town as a response to Agatu claim on the traditional throne in 1993, we have observed with dismay how the noble contribution of our ancestors to the stability of the region is misconstrued and falsified with untruth. Thus, it becomes expedient on the one hand to review and reveal the historical account of Kyaraku such that the attributed hearsay and falsehoods will not take the toga of truth; and on the other hand to commemorate and celebrate **500 years existence of Kyaraku i.e 1522 to 2022.**

In order to achieve a coherent review of the history, the following members were drafted into the historical research and publication committee:

1. ALH, ISA ALIYU NDAKO ..... Chairman
2. MUHAMMED BADAMASI NDAKO ..... Member
3. HASSAN ADA USMAN .....Member
4. SULAIMAN YARO MAKU ..... Member
5. SAIDU BALA NDAKO ..... Member
6. IBRAHIM NDA LIMAN .....Member
7. IBRAHIM ISA ALIYU ..... Secretary

I commend the razor sharp work of the committee for a job well done and pray to Almighty God to bless them abundantly and help them carry on with the good works of our ancestors.

However, through the lens of history, we gain a unique perspective on the present and a glimpse into the future; gaining insights on triumphs and tragedies that befell Kyaraku and actions that led to pivotal moments in our shared history. Thus, it is a testament to the power of history to inform and inspire us and generations yet

unborn, and to connect us to our ancestors as well as the world around us.

This book is not just a collection of facts and dates, but a narrative of human experiences that have shaped the settlement. It offers a unique opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the forces that have shaped Kyaraku and the lessons we can learn from the past.

I hope that this book will inspire you to explore the rich tapestry of human history and to appreciate the complexity and richness of the human experience. It is my sincere hope that this book will provide you with a deeper appreciation for the past, in order to gain a greater understanding of the present.

Sincerely,

Alh. Isa Aliyu Ndako
Danburan Nasarawa/Tafidan Loko
Regent of Kyaraku.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword

1.1 Introduction: Overview of the Historical Events and Context ---------- 1 - 2

2.1 Historical Background ---------- 2 - 3

2.2 The Meaning of the Name Kyaraku ---------- 3

3.0 Location, Population and Size---------- 3

3.1 Location---------- 3 - 4

3.2 Population and Size---------- 4

4.1 Culture and Religion---------- 4 - 5

5.0 Governance, Leadership and Succession Over the Kyaraku Territory ---------- 5

5.1 The Kings of Kyaraku---------- 5 - 6

5.2 The Regents of Kyaraku---------- 6

6.1 Land Tenure in Kyaraku---------- 6 - 7

7.1 Domestic Economy, Commerce and Trade--------- 7 - 8

7.2 Slave Raiding and Trade---------- 8

7.3 Trust of an Ally and the Unknown Marauders Joining the Campaign---------- 8 - 10

8.0 The Neighbouring Communities---------- 10

8.1 Bassa and Their King---------- 10

8.2 The Okpoto and Agatu Across the Benue River---- 10 - 11

8.3 Afo in The Hinterlands---------- 11

8.4 The Igbira of Panda (Umaisha)---------- 11

9.1 Contact with the First European Explorers---------- 11 - 12

10.0 Kyaraku before and after the Advent of Colonial Administration---------- 12 - 13

10.1 Before the Colonial Administration---------- 13

10.2 During the Colonial Administration---------- 13 - 14

11.1 The Orange Union between Nasarawa, Kyaraku and Loko ----------14 – 15

11.2 The Port of Loko and the Revival of Loko Town------15 - 16

12.1 Conclusion: Reflections and Legacies---------- 16 - 17

1.1 INTRODUCTION: OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORICAL EVENTS AND CONTEXT

The story of Kyaraku is a tale of triumphs and tragedies, of great achievements and terrible mistakes. From its evolution to the present day, we have struggled to understand our place in the present governmental and traditional settings as well as echoed our determination to create a society that reflect our values, culture and beliefs.

This historical book is an attempt to capture some of the most important moments in the history of Kyaraku, to explore the events and people that have shaped our world, and to provide a deeper understanding of the forces that have driven human progress.

The book is organized chronologically, beginning with the earliest known account of the foundation of the settlement and moving forward through time to the present day. Each chapter focuses on a particular issue in history, examining the key events, ideas, and people that defined that era.

The book aims to provide a comprehensive and accurate account of the Kyaraku's history, traditions, customs, and social organization, as well as its political, economic, cultural and religious developments over time. Itdelves into the forces of change that have shaped Kyaraku's history, providing a nuanced and multifaceted perspective on the past.

The scope of the historical account will cover the founding, growth and development over time. Its interactions with neighbouring communities, and Kyaraku's contributions to the broader history and culture of the region. It will also include information on the leadership, governance structures, and social organization, as well as its religious, economic and cultural practices. Also of importance is the position of the trading port at Loko; the expulsion of Bassa after the King of Bassa renege on the allegiance given to the King of Kyaraku who hosted him and his subjects in his territothe coming of the British explorers and subsequent treaty for the establishment of British colonial government as well as the fusing of an orange union for the stability and economic development of the general Kyaraku Territory within the new larger Nasarawa Country.

At its core, this book is a celebration of the human spirit and a tribute to the ingenuity, creativity, and resilience of our species as the inheritors of the past. It is an invitation to explore the rich tapestry of human experience and to gain a deeper appreciation for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

2.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The journey of the Nupe people of Kyaraku was as a result of the 16th century upheaval of the Nupe Kingdom in West Africa, part of the present North-Central, Nigeria. History has it that by 1522 the Nupe people founded Kyaraku and were already settled in this location with control over land areas of the river catchment.

During the processes of the unification of Nupe Kingdom in the 16th century by the famous Edegi (*Tsoede*), there arose several inter-clannish warfare amongst the Nupes resenting the formation of Central Kin-Nupe Kingdom. It is in the course of this trend that Etsu Ta'adina from Agaie who is the cousin of Etsu Igigumbi joined him at his place in Gulu and together with the numerous followers emigrated to the Lower Benue river area and establish the Kyaraku settlement located around the Kyaraku river; a tributary of the Benue river. At its incetion, Etsu Ta'adina was the founding King of Kyaraku, while Etsu Igigumbi was Deputising as *Ndă-ejî*.

The language spoken by the people of Kyaraku is of the Nupoid group in the Benue-Congo branch of the Niger Congo language family. Other languages in the group are Kakanda, Igbira, Bassa'nge, Dibbo, Abawa, Gbagyi, Koro, Kusopa, Gade, Chekpan, Tako, Kupa, Beni, Lakpanti, Zam, Batachi, and Kede.

The Kyaraku settlement of Nupawa is one of the oldest surviving historical settlement in Nasarawa Local Government predating the establishment of Nasarawa town with 310 years. It has existed for 288 years with all its traditional governance and organisational structure before the Bassa emigrants were accommodated based on allegiance extracted from their paramount King that enable him and his subjects to settle temporarily in the Kyaraku area North of Benue river, just as they were accommodated on the South bank of the Benue river in the Attah Igala territory.

Conclusively, after the paramount King of Bassa renege on the allegiance with the Nupawa of Kyaraku, there was no other option

than to expel the Bassa in the territory of Kyaraku terminating the 45 years hosting of the Bassa.

2.2 THE MEANING OF THE NAME KYARAKU

At its founding the settlement was named ***KYÁRAKÛN*** (Gadman, 1914; Varvill, 1922), owing to i) the Nupe cultural tradition and ii) close affinity to water bodies based on the intrinsic nature of our forefathers as water people. Thus, based on the transmitted tradition on the morphology; the name ***Kyàrakûn*** was formed from the compound of three (3) Nupe words (***Kyà – ra – kûn***) all related to water-based activities connoting ***'let's dive to the bottom of the river' ('muje muyi nutso a cikin ruwa').***

Kyà: *to dive*
Ra: *to fetch*
Kûn: *waterside; river tributary*

Undoubtedly, it is a known fact just as the witnessing of the rising of the sun that *Kyaraku* is distinctly *NUPE*. The corruption of the name pronunciation stems from the tonal addition of *Ɔ* and *I(E)* to the name by the *Afos, Agatus* and *Bassas*, as in *Okereku* and *Ikereku or Ekereku*. This should set the record straight as seen in literatures on the name Kyaraku and the erroneous attribution of the founding to Bassa who happen to migrate to the Kyaraku country from Gumna, Gabi-Zaria in the early 1800.

The ***Kyarakun-Nupawa*** is a *personification phrase*, reaffirming and emphasizing that Kyaraku is indeed a Nupe settlement (Gadman, 1914) and belongs to Nupawa as against any thought of having an area within Kyaraku that has also a seeming personification attached as to Afo or Agatu or Bassa Thus, the phrase ***Kyarakun-Nupawa*** is an identity statement or more fortNupawa ***Mutanen Kyaraku'.***

3.0 LOCATION, POPULATION AND SIZE

3.1 LOCATION

Before the establishment of Nasarawa in, 1835 Kyaraku has reached the height of its fame having existed for more than three centuries. On the world map, Kyaraku lies between latitudes ***8° 1' 4.8"*** and ***8° 1' 33.6"*** North of the Equator and longitudes ***7° 44' 9.5"*** and ***7° 50' 9.6"*** East of the Greenwich Meridian. This geographically places the area within the Kyaraku River catchment.

Geographically Kyaraku shares boundaries with Ushan Rogo in the North; Loko in the East, River Benue to the South and Illa towards West.

3.2 POPULATION AND SIZE

The Kyaraku village is a Nupe settlement (Gadman, 1914; Morgan, 1918) and has a mixed population of about 1520 as surveyed in 1993.

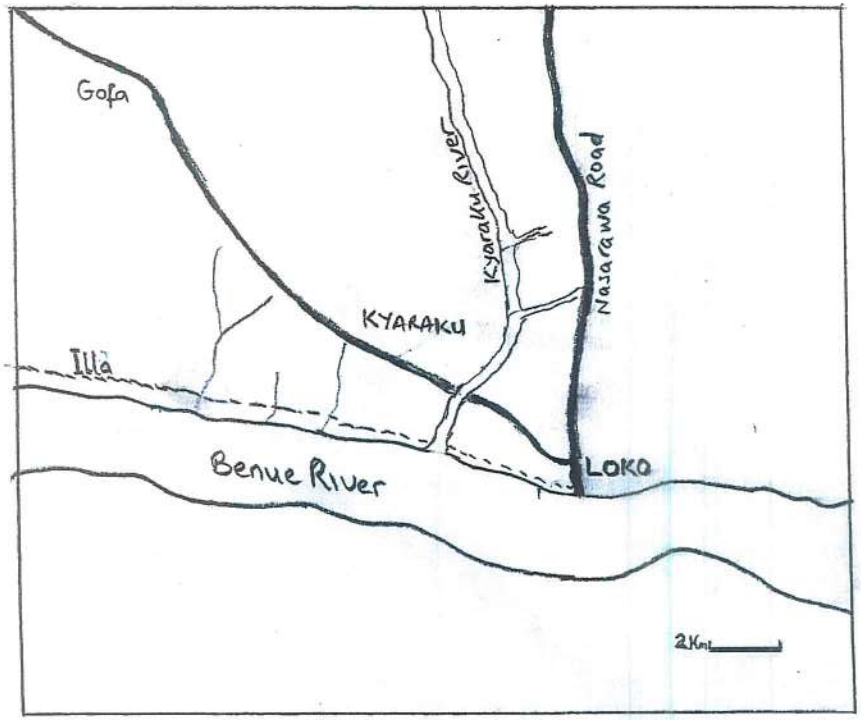


Fig 1: Map of Kyaraku Region

4.1 CULTURE AND RELIGION

Islamic influences are traceable in Nupe, Igbira and among Igala ruling classes long before the Usman Danfodio Islamic Reforms (Hogben and Kirk-Greene, 1966 pp. 139). In fact, Islam was known to exist particularly among the ruling classes of autonomous and independent confederacy before the impact of the Islamic Reform.

It should be noted that Islam began to shape the political influences of Kyaraku after the foundation in the 16th century and became a dominant force in the society after the 1804 Islamic Reforms by partnering with the newly formed Nasarawa, which was led by Umaru Makama Dogo. Thus, the dominant religion of the Kyaraku people is Islam. Earlier traditional religion and paganism have been abolished long ago.

5.0 GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND SUCCESSION OVER THE KYARAKU TERRITORY

History has it that by 1522, the Nupawa people founded Kyaraku and were already settled in it. Thus, prior to the commencement of colonial administration, Kyaraku as an independent territory; govern and control the mostly uninhabited lands within and beyond the Kyaraku river catchment east and west of the present Loko.

Kyaraku settlement had a long-standing established traditional local administration over its people from inception in 1522 up to date. The Kyaraku ruling house have produced 20 rulers over these years comprising of 15 Kings (from the first Sarki Ta'adina to the last Sarki Salihu before the long interregnum); and 5 regents; one who served as the Madakin Loko (Nda Isa 1900 - 1918) and one of whom later became the Sarkin Loko (Muhammadu Gana 1919 - 1942) (Varvill, 1922). Thus, Patriarchal authority in Kyaraku is by the headship of the ruling house.

Kyaraku traditional problem started from the early onset of British colonial rule when medium and small independent sovereign were fused into village areas within the newly created Nasarawa and Loko Districts. This system has not really help in the evolution of traditional governance set-up, which bring rancour throughout the formed districts (Varvill, 1936). However, Kyaraku owing to the earlier status of the port of Loko as vassal from time immemorial accept an orange union since the now Loko is an integral land continuum with it, but having a well-defined and clear boundary between Kyaraku and Loko.

5.1 THE KINGS OF KYARAKU

Based on transmitted traditions on the founding of Kyaraku, the title and names of the rulers are immortalized in folklore for generation yet unborn. Specifically, the following are the list of the Kings of Kyaraku.

LIST OF KINGS

i. Sarki Ta'adina Ndako
ii. Sarki Igigumbi Ndagana
iii. Sarki Abdulmuminu
iv. Sarki Musa Gana
v. Sarki Kulugudu Ndagana
vi. Sarki Nda Abubakar
vii. Sarki Abdullahi Gana
viii. Sarki Nda Alhaji
ix. Sarki Umaru Gana Turaki
x. Sarki Ndajiya Ndako
xi. Sarki Isa
xii. Sarki Mallam Jiya
xiii. Sarki Hassan Gana
xiv. Sarki Abubakar
xv. Sarki Salihu (**among the 12 *members that signed the 1884 Treaty***)

5.2 THE REGENTS OF KYARAKU

Furthermore, it should be noted that during this interregnum or occultation the Kyaraku ruling house were controlling the **Kyaraku Territorial Area** through the selected Royal Regents.

i. Regent Nda Isa (Served as Madakin Loko) **(1900 – 1918)**
ii. Regent Muhammadu Gana (Served as Sarkin Loko) **(1918 – 1928)**
iii. Regent Haruna Nda Isa Nakworji **(1928 – 1946)**
iv. Regent Aliyu Ndako **(1946 – 1968)**
v. Regent Isa Aliyu Ndako aka Ndagana **(1968 to date)**

6.1 LAND TENURE IN KYARAKU

Under the existing traditional conditions of the founding of Kyaraku, all Kyaraku inherited territorial areas are owned and controlled by the King and/or regent and thus inherited. Lands were apportioned by the King/Regent to the heads of families. The regent grants the customary right of occupancy to members of the community Land cannot be sold, but it may be redistributed after the migration of the holder or the extinction of the family. The small individual plots are situated near the village, and the larger plots distance away beyond the perimeter of the dug defense trench system.

It is well documented that after the death of Sarkin Loko Muhammadu Gana who happens to be from the Kyaraku Ruling family (Varvill, 1922) and with the ascension of Sarkin Loko Umaru; he decided to take control of the ruwan or tafkin Kyaraku, which

led to instituting legal action in the colonial Native Courts of Nasarawa and Keffi by Mallam Aliyu Ndako (Regent) and Mallam Muhammadu Gajere. The court proceedings and judgement were in the favour of the Ruling House of Kyaraku. The colonial administrators had to direct the Sarkin Loko Umaru who reigned from 1942 to 1969 to henceforth cede from interfering on the Kyaraku territorial area without the consent of the Regent. This judgement was possible owing to the deep traditional knowledge of the colonial masters in respect of Kyaraku being a Nupe settlement and a host with already established traditional governance system, but have cooperated with the British colonial rule from onset as a result of the reorganisation of indirect rule modalities.

With regards the land tenure system in Kyaraku, there exist a long established distinction between the fertile but dry uplands, the vast stretches of the valuablefloodplains along the Benue river bank and ditched walled settlement area for habitation. The variation in the use value of land have contributed to the development of mono-restricted different land tenure system presided by the Sarkin Kyaraku in the past and the Regent now.

7.1 DOMESTIC ECONOMY, COMMERCE AND TRADE

Economically the area is predominantly agricultural with advantages being suitable for the rearing and breeding of livestock; cultivation of root crops, cereals vegetables, Shea butter tree and palm trees. It has also raw material resources such as silica sand, quality clay and lumbering.

During the pre-colonial period the King of Kyaraku established diplomatic and commercial contacts with many far independent states such as merchants from the far Northern Nigeria (Kano, Zaria, Katsina, Ibbi, etc) and neighbouring villages and tribes especially Doma, Afo, Agatu, Igala, Igbira and the later emigration of Bassa as a result of the upheaval in the Gabi Kingdom, Zaria.

The people of the areaengage in farming, fishing, trading, crafts, blacksmithing, hunting, weaving, pottery and other service industries. This propel the domestic economy and help build political power that was reinforced through marriage. Cowrie shells were not just used for commerce and trade, but were also used as ornaments and for decoration. It is worthy to note that the weaving

industries was highly developed in Kyarakand men were the primary weavers (Gadman, 1914).

7.2 SLAVE RAIDING AND TRADE

At the beginning of the 19th Century the norther frontier of Kyaraku began to suffer from slave-raiders. Precisely, the first ten years saw the emergence of Keffi from where the surrounding country is raided and slaves caravan were sent northward. This marauding activities continued southward beyond Kyaraku territory up to crossing the Benue river (Sciortino, 1920 pp. 5).

Persistent slave raiding had very significant consequences on the settlement patterns and movement of people due west and south of Kyaraku territory. Wallace (1902) observed that in the newly organized Nasarawa Emirate, a once fertile and populous province is revealing the remains and ruins of totally deserted villages, bearing witness to the desolation by the over 100 years internecine strife and slave raiding by e marauders that was erroneous attributed in literatures as part of Jihad.

7.3 TRUST OF AN ALLY AND THE UNKNOWN MARAUDERS JOINING THE CAMPAIGN

Umaru Makama Dogo server ties with Keffi and was expelled (Sciortino, 1920 pp. 16). He later rose to prominence and become a distinguished general. In his career as a general, he has forged alliances with the Gwandara of Ara, Nupawa of Kyaraku and Gade tribes (Mockler-Ferryman, 1892. With this statesmanship and alliances, he sought for independent status from the Sarkin Zazzau, Zaria, which tradition his successors Ahmadu (1858 – 1878) and Muhammadu (1878 - 1922) followed.

The slave raiding is followed as an economic activity by vast number local chiefs in the middle belt area and intertribal warfare for the purpose of capturing slaves is pursued (Mockler-Ferryman, 1900). The slaves are required for services as domestic servants, trading boys, harem attendants, concubines, labour and carriers. Due to thise in demand, later raiding to gain slave were becoming unsuccessful because the pagan people mostly Bassa that were given temporary residency by the Nupes have devise means of elusiveness.

Moreover, towns and settlements are not totally immune from incessant raids for slaving purpose making the whole of the middle

belt country to be infested by slave-raiders. As such, Kyaraku was attacked on two occasion, but the attacks were successfully repulsed owing to the fact that the Kyaraku seat of government is well fortified by series of dug defense trench systems walling the settlement **(see Plate 1)**.

Plate 1: Part of the series of the remains dug trench systems for defence walling Kyaraku settlement

As an ally, Umaru Makama Dogo knew that there is a marriage relationship between the daughter of the King of Bassa and the Kyaraku ruling house. However, the government of the Nupe of Kyaraku sees Bassa as rebels since they cast off the yoke of allegiance and are fomenting troubles along the Benue river transportation corridor obstructing trade and practicing cannibalism.

It is also observed that the propensity to reneged on allegiance with the Kyaraku government is high based on the problem the King of Bassa already had with his host the Attah Igala by claiming absolute independence on the south bank of Benue river. Thus, this development portends danger and a decision by the Kyaraku government was reached to terminate the temporary residency of his subjects and control over the trading port at Loko given to the King of Bassa. Thus, deemed to be expelled from the Kyaraku territory.

As such arrangement was concluded and strategies were mapped out with the combine support of the contingent of Umaru Makama

Dogo to terminate thevassal ship over Loko given to the King of Bassa and completely eradicate paganism in the area owing to the ongoing Islamic Reforms of Usman Danfodio and in the month of April 1832 the vassal area of Loko was attacked (Hutchinson, 1855). The campaign opportunity was surreptitiously used to attack the main Kyaraku were all slaves and other valuables were carted away a situation that Sarki Umaru Makama Dogo attributed to unknown marauders that joined the campaign against the Bassa.

8.0 THE NEIGHBOURING COMMUNITIES

The Kyaraku neighbouring villages and tribes include Afo, Agatu, Igala, Igbira and the later emigration of Bassa in the early 1800's as a result of the upheaval in the Gabi Kingdom, Zaria. There is brotherly relationship with Andoma of Doma Country based on the temporary stay enroute the founding of Kyaraku in the 16th Century.

8.1 BASSA AND THEIR KING

Apart from Hausa and Fulani, the Bassa people are probably the most widespread people owing to the disintegration of their Gabi Kingdom at Zaria in the early 19th Century. This directed the influx of Bassa to the Benue river area in large numbers and due to alliances made with the Nupe of Kyaraku inhabiting the north bank area of the Benue river accommodated them as well as the Attah Igala gave them permission also to occupy the southern bank of the Benue river, which was later called Bassa Province. Thus, Bassa were placed between the Nupe in the North and Okpotos cum Agatu in the South (Byng-Hall,1907; Clifford, 1944)

The paramount Bassa King Adama who resides in the south bank of Benue river base on allegiance betroth his daughter to the King of Kyaraku. As a kind gesture and based on mutual alliance the control of Loko, which is a port town of Kyaraku was given as a vassal to the King of Bassa owing to the allegiance and marriage to the King of Kyaraku on the one hand and the large and industrious nature of the Bassa subject for labour on the other hand.

8.2 THE OKPOTO AND AGATU ACROSS THE BENUE RIVER

The Okpoto is fondly attributed to Igbira tribe as a misnomer. The Igala of the Bassa Province recognise the existence of this tribe, which is well south of Bassa Province. In another dimensionthe ruling Igala of Idah call their provincialIgal a brethren of Bassa Province, Okpoto, as a term of contempHowever, t he true Okpoto

speaking tribe is situated in Southern Nigeria, well south of the confines of Bassa Province (Sciortino, 1920 pp. 18).

The Agatu are situated across the Benue river neighbouring the Bassa. Conversely, most of the Agatu villages have crossed over from across the Benue river, Bassa Province south of Kyaraku in 1904 (Gadman, 1914). They are accommodated on the eastern and western fronts of Kyaraku territory

8.3 AFO IN THE HINTERLANDS

The Afo neighbours are mostly situated north of the Kyaraku territory into the area of Nasarawa. They also inhabit the eastern port town of Udeni.

8.4 THE IGBIRA OF PANDA (UMAISHA)

The Igbira ofPanda Kingdomare alsoengaging in trading and commercial activities with Kyaraku. There is good working relationship with the ruling elites especially after the emergence of a muslim King Muhammad (*Ogára*) (1854) who happened to be the grandson of the first King Malegedú.

9.1 CONTACT WITH THE FIRST EUROPEAN EXPLORERS

It is well documented by our ancestors that they had contacts with the first Europeans to undertake the expedition of the Benue river. Mr Lander opined that they received invitation from the King of Kyaraku (Murray, 1853). On the 16th of August 1832 the steam vessel Alburkah anchored at the bank of the Benue river within the territory of Kyaraku (Laird and Oldfield, 1837). The place harbours palm trees and presently is situated within the river bank farther down mangoro hudu, Yelwa Tsoho, Kyaraku **(see Plate 2)**.

Plate 2: Palm Trees around the anchor bank, Yelwa Tsoho, Kyaraku

10.0 KYARAKU BEFORE AND AFTER THE ADVENT OF COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION

The Lower Benue River area where Kyaraku is situated was made up of various independent colonies, fiefdoms and states before the colonial administration. These states were ruled by Kings and Chiefs who had a significant amount of autonomy and were able to establish trade relationships with neighbouring communities.

The Kyaraku region before and during colonial administration was characterized by a diverse and complex social, economic, and political landscape. The region was home to the Nupe people as its founders and have willfully accommodated other variety of ethnic groups such as Afo, Agatu, Bassa, Igala, Igbira etc., each with its own distinct culture, language, and social structure.

However, the arrival of British colonial administrators in the late 19th century marked a significant turning point in the history of Northern Nigeria. The British sought to establish political control over the region, and they did so through a combination of military force and diplomacy (Kisch, 1910). With the execution of the treaty with the Kings and Chiefs of Nasarawa Territory signed at Loko on 25th

October 1884 by Edward Hyde Hewette, Consul to Her Majesty, the colonial administration introduced a centralized system of government, which replaced the traditional systems of feudalism and local governance. This system of indirect rule and lumping of various small independent colonies had a significant impact on Kyaraku being an aboriginal inhabitant of long standing as it altered their traditional systems of governance and justice.

10.1 Before the Colonial Administration

Before the advent of colonialism in Nigeria, the Kyaraku was an autonomous political entity that was ruled by a traditional ruler known as the Sarki. The Sarki was the absolute monarch who wielded both political and religious power, and his subjects were expected to obey his orders and commands.

The economy of Kyaraku was primarily agrarian, and the people engaged in subsistence farming. Crops such as yam, maize, and cassava were grown, while cattle, goats, and sheep were reared. Kyaraku was also a major trading center through the port at Loko, where goods such as kola nuts, cotton, and leather were traded with neighbouring communities andraders from the North and South.

Prior to the arrival of European colonial powers, Kyaraku was primarily organized around a system of feudalism, where local aristocrats and ruler held significant political and economic power over their subjects. The region was also known for its vibrant trade networks, which facilitated the exchange of goods and ideas across different communities owing to having a port at Loko.

10.2 During the Colonial Administration

The advent of colonialism in Nigeria changed the political, social, and economic landscape of the country, including Kyaraku. The British colonial administrators implemented policies and laws that changed the traditional and cultural practices of communities in Northern Nigeria. The Kings continued to wield political power, although subjected to the authority of the British colonial authorities.

The colonial administration introduced a new system of administration that abolished the traditional administrative units

and replaced them with newly created ones. This system was designed to improve governance and facilitate colonial control over the entire Northern Nigeria. The British also introduced modern education and health facilities, which led to increased literacy rates and improved health outcomes.

Due to the advent of colonial administration, there were significant changes to the political and economic systems in the Lower Benue River area. The colonial administration established a system of indirect rule, which relied heavily on the cooperation of local rulers to maintain order and exert control. Additionally, the British implemented various economic policies aimed at expanding their sphere of influence in the region.

The colonial administration had significant impacts on Northern Nigeria, and many of its effects are still felt today, leading to significant changes in the culture and social structures of the region. The legacy of colonialism has also contributed to the ongoing challenges of poverty and political instability that befell Kyaraku.

11.1 THE ORANGE UNION BETWEEN NASARAWA, KYARAKU AND LOKO

The River Niger and River Benue were two major trading highways in West Africa that had little other infrastructure. Rivers were the lifeblood of communications and trade. Thus, traders had long navigated the channels and tributaries of these mighty rivers. As a result of the unsecured access to the trade corridor of the north of the Benue river by the rampaging caravan raiding, thievery and cannibalism through the practices of wild paganism by the Bassa and the impeding Islamic Reforms of Usman Danfodio necessitated the formation of an orange union between Nasarawa and Kyaraku.

The union is expected to rid the Benue trade routes of any possible trade interference and to eradicate paganism by consolidating on the Islamic Reforms of Usman Danfodio. Thus, Umaru Makama Dogo as an ally led the campaign against the Bassa pagans.

With the expulsion of the Bassa from the Kyaraku territorial area and subsequent termination of vassal ship of the port of Loko the integrity of the Benue river transportation corridor was restored and strong alliance and partnership was forged between the Sarki Umaru Makama Dogo and the ruling house of Kyaraku.

Consequently, to strengthen the union between Kyaraku and the newly formed emirate of Nasarawa, the Sarki Umaru Makama Dogo agree to appoint a member of the Kyaraku ruling house into his principal cabinet. This led to the appointment of Nda Jatau, a prince from Kyaraku as the first Wambai of Nasarawa.

11.2 THE PORT OF LOKO AND THE REVIVAL OF LOKO TOWN

The British had been content to keep their presence limited to the coast and the mouths of the rivers engaging in trade with settlement by the river banks as well as proximal main towns in the hinterlands. Loko the port town of Kyaraku has grown principally because of its intercourse with the Royal Niger Company established in 1880 (Kisch, 1910) and the presence of the port serving a dual purpose of a trading station and a base of operations for slaving expeditions.

With the advent of the colonial administration of Lord Lugard a new pattern of relationship was formed between the port of Loko and Kyaraku the host leading toan orange union officiated by former alliances with Sarki Umaru Makama Dogo the founder of Nasarawa and consummated by his successor Sarki Muhammadu.

In the foregoing years the Hausa traders from the far North decided to re-establish the devastated port of Loko and with the support given the port town of Loko was revived and tremendous trade and commerce ensued as a result of the new partnership with the British colonial powers.

The port status now gave Loko the prominence. And it is in Loko that the treaty with the Kings and Chiefs of Nasarawa Territory was signed on 25th October 1884 between Edward Hyde Hewette, Consul to Her Majesty and Sarkin Nasarawa Muhammadu together with 11 traditional Chiefs of the new Nasarawa Territoryincluding Sarkin Kyaraku Salihu as a signatory to the treaty also.

Thus, the people of Kyaraku have over looked all existing obstacles, which patience and effort could remove to give protection and encouragement of having a safe and viable trading corridor at the bank of Benue river. As such after the termination of earlier vassal ship arrangement and expulsion of the Bassa that were allowed and accommodated within the Kyaraku Territory for about 45 years, the new orange union practically gave the port town of Loko to

Nasarawa and the incoming traders from the North traded from 1850 up to the coming of British colonial rule in 1900.

12.1 CONCLUSION: REFLECTIONS AND LEGACIES

As we come to the end of our journey through time, we are left with a deeper understanding of the forces that have shaped the history of Kyaraku. We have seen the interplay of the evolutionary forces in the face of progress and adversity. But our journey does not end here. The challenges and opportunities of the future are as daunting as any we have faced in the past.

We are a people with the hitherto mentioned history. We cannot sacrifice our identity having participated in ensuring the stability of the area. We have suffered oppression and suppression by the government of the past without considering the traditional historical facts.

As we look to the future, we must draw on the lessons of the past to guide us towards the prosperity of Kyaraku. We must remember the power of human ingenuity and creativity, the importance of empathy and compassion, and the vital role of cooperation and collaboration in achieving our goals.

Above all, we must never forget that the choices we make today will shape the world of tomorrow, and it is up to us to work together to create a future that is worthy of the sacrifices and struggles of our forefathers who have come before us. So let us take the lessons of history to heart, and let us strive to build a better world for ourselves and for generations to come.

As we come to the end of this historical journey, we are left with a deeper appreciation for the complexity and richness of human history. From the earliest founding of Kyarakuto the present day, we have witnessed the rise and fall, the triumphs and tragedies ofour progress, and the enduring resilience of the human spirit.

Throughout the centuries we have struggled to overcome adversity, to build a better for us and for the future generations. And while the challenges we face today may be different from those of the past, the lessons of history remain relevant and vital. By understanding the past, we can better navigate the present and shape a brighter future for all. As we close this book, we are reminded that history is not just a collection of facts and dates, but

a living, breathing narrative of human experience. Let us continue to learn from the past, and work towards a better tomorrow.

LONG LIVE KYARAKU!
LONG LIVE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA!

Alh. Isa Aliyu Ndako
Danburan Nasarawa/Tafidan Loko
Regent of Kyaraku.

Yunus (Jonah)
Chapter 10: Verse 55

Unquestionably, to God belongs whatever
is in the heavens and the earth.
Unquestionably, the promise of God is
truth, but most of them do not know.

REFERENCES

Allen, W and Thompson, T. R. H. (1848) *A Narrative of the Expedition to the River Niger in 1841*, 2 vols. London.

Brett, M. (1969), Ifriqiya as a market for Saharan trade from the tenth to the twelfth Century A.D. *Journal of African History*, 10(3):347-364.

Burdon, J.A. (1909), *Northern Nigeria: historical notes on certain Emirates and Tribes*. London: Waterlow & Sons.

Byng-Hall, F. F. W. (1907), *Law and Customs Notes on Bassa Province, Bassa-Komu Tribes*. EAP535/2/2/6/148.

Clifford, M. (1944), *Notes on the Bassa-Komu Tribes in the Igala Division*. MAN, Vol. 44, Issue 5, pp. 107 – 116.

Daryll F, Brown, P, and Armstrong, R. G. (1955), *Peoples of the Niger Benue Confluence*., London. Pg. 18-22, 57

Gadman, H. (1914), *Nassarawa Province, Loko District Assessment Report*. EAP535/2/5/2/53 London: John Murray.

Hogben, S.J. and Kirk-Greene, A.H.M. (1966). *The Emirates of Northern Nigeria: A Preliminary Survey of their Historical Traditions*. London: Oxford University Press. Pg. 139

Hutchinson, T.J. (1855) Narratives of the Niger, Tsadda, and Binue River Expedition. London: Frank Cass.

Kisch, M. S. (1910) Letters and Sketches from Northern Nigeria. London: Chatto & Windus.

Laird, M. and Oldfield, R.A.C. (1837), *Narrative of an Expedition into the Interior of Africa by the River Niger in the Steam Vessels Quorra and Alburkah in 1832, 1833 and 1834,* (London, 1837), Volume I and 2.

Mason, M. (1969), Population density and slave raiding. The case of the Middle Belt of Nigeria. *Journal of African History*,10:551 - 634.

Meek, C. K., (1925), *The Northern Tribes of Northern Nigeria, Vol. 1, London pg. 81*.

McLeod, Olive (1912), *Chiefs and Cities of Central Africa*. Edinburgh & London: William Blackwood & sons.

Mockler-Ferryman, A. F. (1892), *Up the Niger*. London: George Philip & Co.

Mockler-Ferryman, A. F. (1900), *British West Africa: Its Rise and Progress*. London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co.

Mockler-Ferryman, A. F. (1902), *British Nigeria: A Geographical and Historical Descrioption of the British Possession Adjacent to the Niger River, West Africa*. London: Cassell and Company.

Morgan, W (1918), *Nassarawa Province, Reassessment Report on Loko District*.

Murray, H (1853), *The African Continent: A Narrative of Discovery and Adventure*. London: T. Nelson & sons.

Richardson, J. (1853), *Narrative of a mission to Central Africa, performed in the years 1850-1851*. 2 vols. London: Chapman & Hall.

Sciortino, J.C. (1920), *Notes on Nassarawa Province*. London, Dunstable & Watford: Waterlow & Sons.

Varvill, M. H (1922), *The Afo Tribes of Nasarawa Emirate*.

Varvill, M. H (1936), *The Afo Tribes of Nasarawa Emirate: Reorganisation of.*

Venn, H. (1865), *West African Colonies* (London, 1865)

TRADITIONAL HISTORICAL REFERENCES

Mallam Afa Abdullahi Usman (1992) *History of the founding of Kyaraku and the routes followed by the contingent members during the emigration.*

Mallam Aliyu Ndako (Regent, Kyaraku) (Undated) *Historical documentation on the founding of Kyaraku, list of Kings, the coming of Makama Dogo and the coming of Europeans. Written in Ajami Script.*

Oral history transmission by Mallam Muhammadu D.O (Kpetun Yelwa, Kyaraku) (1992). *Documented by Mallam Afa Abdullahi Usman.*

Oral history transmission by Baba Iyakpa Muhammadu Ndako (1992). *Documented by Mallam Afa Abdullahi Usman.*

Oral history transmission by Mallam Muhammadu Gajere (1989). *Documented by Mallam Afa Abdullahi Usman.*

Oral history transmission by Alh. Isa Aliyu Ndako (Regent) (2008). *Documented by Ibrahim Isa Aliyu.*

Oral interview with Alhaji Maku (2008) *by Saidu Bala Ndako.*

Oral interview with Badoko Yelwa (2008) *by Saidu Bala Ndako.*

Oral interview with Mallam Muhammadu Gajere on the court proceedings between Kyaraku ruling house and Sarkin Loko Umaru on intentional interference with the use and operation of ruwan fadaman Kyaraku(1988) *by Mallam Afa Abdullahi Usman.*